The LISNews Summer Series

2009

A note to readers of this volume:

The essays contained herein have been harvested from their respective posts at LISNews. In-text links have not been carried over as links have a habit of going dead over time. The meaning of the essays was preserved as best as possible.

Announcing The LISNews Summer Series
Stephen Michael Kellat

A few weeks ago Blake Carver commissioned me to come up with a summer guest author series. Unexpected twists and turns helped delay the launch of the series until now. With this post I can now kick off the series.

Guests will be joining us for the next couple of weeks to contribute essays. A particular author has been set for each week and that author will be

posting two or more essays. These are intended to spark new lines of thought as well as to perhaps amuse you.

I will be kicking off the series with essays this week. The guests to come will be surprises. Our very own Blake Carver will wrap up the series in its last week.

There are a variety of ways to follow the series. The first option would be to come to the site. The branch of the taxonomy tree to watch is "Summer Series". Another option would

be to utilize RSS. The feed to plug into your feed reader is:

http://feeds.feedburner.com/SummerSeries.

If you wish to receive an e-mail containing whole essays when they are posted, you can sign up using the form below. E-mails post between 1100 GMT and 1500 GMT. This is a two step process. After going through the first step below as well as the consequential pop-up, you will need to look for an e-mail in your inbox bearing the subject line Activate your Email Sub-

scription to: LISNews Summer Series and click on the verification link. If you forget to do that, you will not receive anything in your inbox.

[Form Block in Original Not Reproduced Here]

Essays will be posted under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license. In the end, the collected essays will be posted to Internet Archive. For those not favorably disposed to online archives, the collection will also be made

available ***at cost*** in print form through Lulu.

Pondering The Viewing Glass
Stephen Michael Kellat

One of the issues coming out of ALA Annual 2009 this year is the matter of transparency. Librarians like technology. Librarians like to use to technology. Price tags are a little daunting, though, when presented for things that seem to be so cheap as to be almost free as in beer.

Norman Oder has a report in Library Journal that outlines the costs of various options in promoting transparency. Oder's report does not explain too

much in depth as to how the particular figures are derived. The annual cost of posting audio files of Council proceedings seems to be a bit high on the processing/posting end unless such has included the eventual costs of bandwidth in serving up such files. In some respects the cost of bandwidth in serving up content can be far greater than the cost of producing it.

Accessibility is also a tremendous concern. Simply put, the process of securing transcripts is not cheap. The work of a

court reporter is not easy, requires specialized training, and they are quite well compensated for their troubles. The Council's lawyer also quite rightly pointed out that having transcripts of Council discussions could result in lawsuits over remarks by councilors.

Is it really practical to broadcast every waking moment of every panel, session, and hustings at ALA Annual? Is it really necessary? With hundreds of panels and multiple situations where you have concurrent panels, attention is easily divided. A vast

army of observers would be required to have coverage at every single panel. Having videographers accompany the observers would only increase the manpower requirements. Post-production would be a situation more like the investigation by the Columbia Accident Investigation Board relative to the sheer volume of materials to digest. There is a reason why tech news outlets like CNET have a couple weeks of vacation prior to the Consumer Electronics Show as they leave a skeleton crew behind at the office as their army converges on

Las Vegas. The only known group that would even attempt this with volunteers is Pixel-Corps and they have not attempted anything on this sort of scale.

Is all hope lost on covering ALA? No! The technology does not yet exist for proper tele-presence structures so that civilians not attending ALA in person could still be there virtually. The funds to outfit an army to cover the event, let alone cover the attendant logistical nightmares, are non-existent. For the cost of hard-

ware to pull this off, one could presumably fully fund the operation of a rural library for several years. In this case one must look outside the walls of librarianship and step away from comfortable paradigms. Television networks like Universal Sports and ESPN do show ways this could be better handled.

A paradigm used as of late by Universal Sports is not to provide full coverage. Logistically they cannot wage the same level of effort all the time that is required for covering an Olym-

pics. This is where the matter of editorial judgment comes into play. Only highlights of events are recorded for air. Not everything is broadcast in real-time as some events are shown on tape delay. The FIVB World Cup series for beach volleyball was one example of select matches being shown on a delay. Coverage of triathalon competitions, rowing, swimming & diving, and more fall under similar presentation rubrics.

Television networks already exist that could carry this programming. One would be Re-

searchChannel which has coverage via terrestrial broadcasting, cable television, video on-demand, webcast, satellite, and more. Northern Arizona University's UniversityHouse channel, University of Washington Television, and University of California Television are all also available by way of satellite within North America. There are somewhat traditional television-based distribution channels available for pushing conference coverage outward.

In covering only highlights, much of the nightmare of logis-

tics goes away. If you have a smaller team picking and choosing among panels, you can provide a representative sample to viewers at home. The question of deciding what to cover is a matter of editorial control that has no simple solutions, though. In an organization that can seem to outsiders like a confederation of interest groups, the decision-making authority of what to cover is best held not by a committee but by a single editorial official. It could take years for an editorial committee to make a decision in creating a highlights reel

like this while a single individual might take action more quickly.

For all the costs of bandwidth, streaming, captioning, and more involved in Internet-based distribution, DVD fulfillment through a publishing arm like what ALA already has may conservatively allow for a start to such. With online video downloads already quite large and quite costly to transfer in some cases, the use of physical media may allow for easier dissemination. Linux distributions like Ubuntu and OpenSolaris do

this already through physical media distribution for this who lack the bandwidth to either download their operating systems or download them in a timely fashion. This physical alternative to virtual distribution could become a new stream of revenue for ALA, too. Selling sets of DVDs of proceedings could potentially take events to members who could not be there. As Andrew Tannenbaum wrote in *Computer Networks*: "Never underestimate the bandwidth of a station wagon full of tapes hurtling down the highway."

All of this discussion may be great but it points out a separate issue. Is ALA Annual becoming unwieldy in its size and growth? Could more be accomplished if it was broken down into a set of separate events spread across the entire year? If that were to happen, keeping a court reporter in-house would be more cost effective and would mean an ALA film team could be utilized perhaps.

The matter now stands at a question point. What is it the

membership wants? What is *your* ALA?

Mothra Versus Skypeasaurus
Stephen Michael Kellat

Librarians seem to have an aversion to business as a concept. That is unfortunate. Without business and the taxes derived thereby, how else would libraries exist? It is not as if there is a patron these days like Andrew Carnegie endowing library operations. While dreams may be large, the rocket fuel known as greenbacks keeps so many ships on the ground away from their goals.

A situation where this arises is

participation in new media endeavors. The skill sets required for producing in new media are somewhat foreign to the optimal skill sets needed to catalog stacks of materials and answers rapid-fire reference questions. Was it any accident that the producers of the LISNews Netcast Network all happened to have experience in technical theater as well as experience in performance? Those are not skills you pick up in library school and are normally considered within the spectrum of American higher education as not things to pick up initially at

the graduate level.

There are free tools, where free is considered as in free beer rather than freedom, that librarians have already used in producing podcasts. One fairly limited tool that allows call-in roundtables is TalkShoe. The service's quality has gotten worse over time as per my own observation during participation in fan discussions related to Battlestar Galactica. The former program Uncontrolled Vocabulary provided a roundtable for discussing library science issues. The present program T is

for Training attempts to provide a similar roundtable focused on training.

A key flaw with TalkShoe is that purportedly uses technology spun off of the conference loop used by NASA flight controllers who direct shuttle missions. The problem with that is that it works great for providing communications and audio that can be recorded for logging. Such logs were important during situations like the proceedings of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board where actions of flight controllers had to

be reconstructed. For casual listening, the audio's quality was slightly abrasive and somewhat harsh. TalkShoe uses a similar model of recording without the same required discipline that is exhibited by flight controllers executing mission orders.

TalkShoe also has limitations on simultaneous live participants. The upper limits on participation are not too certain but passing the fifty participant threshold can seriously impair a call's proceedings. TalkShoe is not a tool used by outfits like CNET or the TWiT Cottage to re-

cord programs with remote guests. The Skypeasaurus at the TWiT Cottage is a rig built by their studio manager, Colleen, where six simultaneous Skype feeds are brought in and can be independently mixed using a local physical audio mixer. Having a local mixer with a local operator allows far more fine-tuning of audio quality than the automated system of TalkShoe can provide.

Now, let us turn to practical suggestions for how librarians can surmount these problems. For any single library to have

the infrastructure for this in-house would be cost-prohibitive. As the grow of operations at the TWiT Cottage has shown, programs beyond those produced by the TWiT Network are making use of the facilities of the cottage. Having a stable yet reliable hub for bringing in multiple remote guests is apparently quite valuable for diverse group like gdgt and the Gilmor Gang. Translating this into the paradigms of North American librarianship would result in this being an area of activity undertaken by a consortium or a vendor.

The initial startup and construction cost for a consortium to being to provide similar functions to the TWiT Cottage would be immense. At a minimum, the consortium's base would have to have at least one T-1 leased line, one ISDN line, one cable broadband connection, one ADSL connection as a backup, and a single phone line for somebody to answer. As proven from the growing pains of the TWiT Cottage, various data connections to the outside world are best split over separate pipelines so as to ensure

acceptable minimum connection quality. At any fixed location this would also require electrical wiring upgrades to accommodate the increased load from the additional air conditioning that would be required to keep the required hardware operational. A number of computers would have to be procured so that enough possible connections were available via Skype or other VoIP system. Systems for editing would be required. All this would be the case even if no video was involved in production.

The hardest part to this is the matter of securing the funds so that an operating base could be equipped. While such an operation could eventually generate revenue that would allow for self-sufficiency, that would take considerable time. In the present harsh economic climate, merely knowing what is needed does not make it any more likely to become reality. With the tools that are free as in beer not producing appropriate quality output, alternative options are few and far between.

Gazing Over The Gulch
Stephen Michael Kellat

As this is written there is off-and-on discussion in Washington about a possible second "stimulus" package being passed to boost the economy of the United States. The first such package had practically nothing in it that would directly benefit libraries. A rural broadband build-up initiative is nice but it is not something that is going to necessarily impact population centers like Seattle, Portland, Los Angeles, Cleveland, New York City, Atlanta, or others.

There are indirect effects that the stimulus package has on libraries, though.

How are libraries in the United States funded? Like public schools there is quite a bit of library funding dependent upon *ad valorem* property tax levy revenues. During the present economic psychosis property values have been impacted as the housing market bubble shattered. With foreclosures still high in some areas, a fundamental problem arises. If a home is not owned in a traditional sense, who is paying the

taxes on that home? KPIX noted in their local context that typically nobody pays those taxes. Unless adequate support is built into a stimulus package to keep people in their home and pay taxes, no stimulus bill can truly help plug funding holes for libraries.

No tax base alone can be considered safe for funding libraries. Ohio was previously known as having the gold standard for library funding. In the recent squabbles in Columbus that model was impacted somewhat. As the population of the United

States ages, funding priorities can shift in cases from lifelong learning to instead end-of-life medical care. The old rules for the public financing of library operations may not necessarily apply in the same fashion any more.

There is a potential solution to this. What if a library was not tied to tax revenues that varied in value due to economic fluctuations? What if a library could set its own policies as to its possible ancillary operations which may or may not raise revenue?

Spinning off public libraries from being funding concerns of government to being non-profit corporations may become a necessary step. Amidst the balance of agencies requiring funds from governmental tax revenue, setting libraries loose from that trough to instead seek donations and grants can be a structural reform that would relieve pressure on governments.

Public libraries are presently creatures of statute that can only do what their enabling laws permit them to do. Allow-

ing libraries to become non-profit corporations would allow greater flexibility to meet local needs without requiring the amendment of state-wide enabling laws first as only corporate internals would have to be fussed with. This might allow the imposition of coffee shops in libraries with a cut of profits plowed back into library operation. Fee services could also be possible for local libraries adapting to unique local needs.

Only the limits of one's imagination as to the enhanced services potentially offered hold one

back in this regard. In-depth consulting over research questions, small business incubation, and more are just initial possibilities. A recent question posted to the premiere e-mail list for serialists about undertaking bulk purchases of an item like the *Wall Street Journal* for patrons poses an idea. While government agency accounting rules may create problems in making such available to patrons in a manner akin to McDonald's offering newspaper copies, non-governmental status would potentially ease that roadblock.

This would be somewhat of a brave new world for librarians to explore. There might be significant consolidation inherent in any such a structural change. Bookmobile usage let alone deployment might even increase. A contraction in the pool of available MLS-grade jobs would also be fairly likely to occur too. There is a partial example of such a library already in existence in Ohio known as Henderson Memorial Public Library that is owned by the Henderson Library Association and receives some funding sup-

port from state authorities. A companion foundation also exists to carry out fund-raising for the library and could potentially bridge a gap if state support ever disappeared.

Libraries are at a cross-roads. With a flaky economy that seems at times subject to pillaging, being yoked to a funding regime based on tax revenue can be a dangerous proposition. Libraries not only need more freedom than before to raise funds but also more freedom as to how they can act. With the nation's economic health at

fairly distinct lows, stepping away from a regressive funding regime toward independence may allow firmer foundations for continued vitality.

Tax receipts are down and the increases in tax rates that seem to be inevitable do not lead to hope that receipts will increase. The notion of hiding wealth and the means of its production in Galt's Gulch is already growing in popularity and the Tea Party movement has shown signs of the common man growing interested in the concept. If there is nothing to tax or nobody to

pay the taxes how would any public agency survive? While the modern public library paradigm has persisted in North America since the 1870s, nothing says it has to last forever without change.

Explanations: Part Two
The Scientists
Daniel Messer

When I was a kid, I watched a lot of public broadcasting, indeed PBS was my favourite station. There was no childlike devotion to knowledge in this preference. I was nothing like a child prodigy with an advanced curiosity of the world. My love for PBS was very easy to understand and just as kidlike in its nature. I knew that, if I watched the public broadcasting station long enough, sooner or later I'd get to see some Muppets.

I'm still a huge fan of Sesame Street and the Muppets in general. But as a kid, I had no idea what television schedules were. My parents didn't get the TV Guide. For all I knew, the appearance of any show was a happy accident so, since I wanted to see Muppets, and Muppets were on PBS, I watched PBS quite often just on the off chance the Muppets would show up.

One night, while sitting on the floor of my parent's living room, I gazed glassy eyed at the

screen before me. Since I was watching educational programming without any prompting from my parents, they didn't see any need to educate me regarding television timetables. "Just keep an eye out, son," I can hear my father say "The Muppets might be coming on next." So I sat there and waited through the closing credits of a nature show. I liked nature shows. Animals are great, but they were a poor second to Sesame Street. So as the show ended I waited in anticipation for the familiar chords that

kicked off the Sesame Street theme.

Instead I got something different. When the next show started, beautiful music played over stunning images of space. I loved the music and the pictures of space were thrilling, like a science fiction movie. I probably thought that's what was coming on, but then a very soothing voice spoke over the music and explained to me that "the cosmos is all that ever was, or is, or will be."

That voice belonged to Dr. Carl Sagan and the show was part of the award winning documentary series called Cosmos. I sat there, enraptured by what he said. The things he said made sense to me, even though I couldn't have been older than five. Those images of space coupled with the way he spoke so lovingly about the stars and the cosmos changed my life in a couple of ways. On one level, the music was composed and performed by a Greek new age musician calling himself Vangelis because Evangelos Odysseas Papathanassiou is harder

to say. My parents owned a piano and I knew that I wanted to learn how to make music like that.

On another level, I remember turning to my parents after the show was over and saying something along the lines of "I want to be an astronomer when I grow up."

I wasn't the only one affected by Carl Sagan in such a way. Even people who didn't care about space tuned in to watch Cosmos. Through he spoke with a quiet calm, you could tell that

he was deeply passionate about astronomy and that passion carried over to the millions of people who watched the original broadcasts of the documentary and subsequent rebroadcasts. Dr. Sagan did something very special. He introduced people to complex concepts, the mechanics of a supernova for instance, and did so in such a way that everyone could understand. Even as a young boy, I understood most of the things he said. He didn't try to impress you with his intelligence. He didn't use jargon and, when he did use unfamiliar terms, he

46

explained them thoroughly. He wasn't trying to bowl you over with the grandeur of space and the cosmos. Instead, he simply wanted you to understand it just a little bit better than you did before you watched the show.

I didn't become an astronomer, though I came close. I was well on my way to that end when another person I'll talk about on the next show demonstrated that I could have two things I loved at the same time. But that's another story.

Later in life I heard about a brilliant cosmologist and physicist. His best known book became an international best seller for many of the same reasons that Carl Sagan became such a sensation with his documentary. Like Sagan, he wanted to explain complex and, frankly, daunting concepts and he wanted to explain them to the common person. A lofty task when you consider that he wrote about quantum physics, black holes, and the birth of the universe - still, Dr. Stephen Hawking did this beautifully. In his masterpiece, titled A Brief

History of Time, he set out to popularize a scientific concept so difficult to understand that even the experts will freely admit to not understanding how quantum physics works.

Dr. Hawking is a study in deceiving appearances. His body wracked by motor neuron disease, he sits in a wheelchair and is able to speak only though the aid of a speech synthesizing computer. It matters not, because while the body may not be one hundred percent, his mind certainly is.

I picked up Hakwing's book for the same reason tens of thousands of others did, because I'd heard all about it from friends and it sounded interesting. I opened to the first page and started reading. I think I finally put it down when I was well over halfway through it. For me, Hawking picked up where Sagan left off. The fact that I have any base knowledge of quantum reality at all is completely due to Stephen Hawking's clear explanations and insight into the minds of non-physicists.

What does this mean to librarians? I see a few things we can learn here. First, there are times I think we become a little too proud of our profession. We herald ourselves as the guardians of human knowledge and I have no disagreement with that description. However I think some take the metaphor a little too far, as if we're in a Boris Vallejo painting; muscular men and lithe, powerful women standing over the stacks of books and the instruments of learning. It makes for a lovely fantasy portrait, but the fact is that it helps no one; not us, not

our patrons, and certainly not the public perception of our profession.

Sagan and Hawking did their best to make their professions accessible and open. They did this through passion and through restraint. Goodness knows that Hawking could've filled his book with equations and tensor calculus. Dr. Sagan could've written highly technical studies of planetary astronomy and spoke in astronomical terms reserved for times when one scientist speaks to another. But they didn't, did they?

No, they spoke to people based on two assumptions. The first assumption was that you weren't an expert in their professions and not likely to ever become one. This means that they still assumed you to be an intelligent individual. So while they didn't talk down to you, they certainly didn't try and go over your head either. The second assumption is that you had a curiosity and that they could foster it. They could nurture your questions and watch them grow beyond simple questions to the more complex.

How many stories have we all heard of a librarian "helping" a patron and ultimately scaring them off? We should never expect our patrons to be educated in the ways of library science and we should never expect them to care about it either. The person comes to the library seeking knowledge and/or entertainment. Instead of regaling them with the brilliance that is the library institution, how about we instead help them find what they want without imposing our profession on

someone who merely wants information?

Finally, the reason that people listened to Sagan and Hawking is because they were sharing something they were passionate about. Most of us love what we do and we want to share it with others. If you do endeavour to impart your love for librarianship upon others, take a note from these two scientists. Make your profession an open one, not closed off to outsiders. Invite others to see what you see and don't worry if they don't fully understand something.

Very few people fully understand the Large Hadron Collider, but that hasn't curtailed interest from the layperson. As long as a basic grasp is attained, the rest will work itself out. The curious one either walks away slightly better educated for you efforts, or they become more involved.

And if that's the final result then, folks, we all win.

Theory and Practice in the Library Workplace
Vye Perrone

Every so often I hear someone remark that they didn't learn anything in library school; that their real professional learning happened on the job, or worse, that they think that the need for a library qualification is just gate keeping and protectionism. This always causes me some concern because it ignores the important role that library and information science theory plays in the workplace.

It is true that when you start working in a library there is a wealth of on-the-job learning to do. There are process and practical skills to master, and local policies and procedures to absorb. The daily improvement as we gain hands-on experience brings an immediate sense of achievement and an obvious increase in knowledge. The relevance of this behavioral learning is clear because it is needed to do the job. In contrast, knowledge of theory and principles is about understanding why we are doing the procedure. This understanding is

important when making deci-
sions to change local policy or
practices, or in deciding how to
adjust local practices in re-
sponse to the impact of external
factors.

Practical processes and proce-
dures are there to help the li-
brary achieve its goals. The the-
ory of libraries (or cataloging,
reference, etc) is what is taught
(and hopefully learned) in the
process of gaining a profes-
sional library qualification. And
in turn, that theory informs the
daily procedures and practices.
Furthermore, this library school

learning gives library professionals a shared theoretical basis and often a shared value system, on which to make decisions in the workplace; decisions about what the policies will be, and what practices are most appropriate for helping a library achieve its purpose.

Of course, such knowledge is not set in stone. Over time, the theories and principles will change as the professional body of knowledge changes to incorporate new understandings of the library and information world.

In for-profit organizations practical measure usually exist to judge performance. Did more widgets get sold? Are widgets being produced more cheaply? Did the company make more money as a result? The bottom line is more complex however, in not-for-profit organizations like libraries. How do we know that the library is achieving its purpose? More people through the door? More books issued? More information literacy classes taught? Such quantitative measures are useful but they seldom express the real

value libraries contribute to their communities. And because there is not a clearly agreed, black and white measure of the bottom line for libraries, many staff make assumptions based on their own value system. That is, they may assume that the purpose of their work is defined in terms of their value systems.

Changes in processes, policy or practice can be particularly difficult for those who are comfortable with their daily routines and who are working hard in the belief that their actions are contributing to the greater

good of the library. Principles, theories and values can be difficult to articulate because they are often deep-seated, intuitively known and taken for granted. As a consequence, some people may be protective of a given activity because it is representative of their values and beliefs about libraries. A threat to an activity becomes a threat to their values. Resistance or obstruction to change can easily result if those affected belief that a proposed change is going to have a negative impact on their library's core purpose.

Library managers, or those leading change (even at the process level) may find it helps to take time to explore the commonly held beliefs and assumptions of their staff. Consider whether they are disagreeing with how things should be done, or if the conflict is at a more fundamental level. Do participants have differing theoretical perspectives on what sort of action adds value to the library's community?

This is important because changing beliefs and value sys-

tems is a far more challenging proposition than changing daily routines. Yet all too often in libraries the focus is on the more tangible behavioral learning rather than on the intangible theory that underlies practice. Of course, it makes sense on a day-to-day basis to focus staff training on how things should be done, but when a significant change is needed, time needs to be given to talking about why the change is being made and how it fits into the theory and principles of libraries and librarianship.

It seems that this kind of talk is not that common in libraries. Perhaps there is a tendency to assume that we are all working from the same set of core principles and theories, because most of us are as a result of our library school learning. But problems arise when time or external changes make some of our theories obsolete or irrelevant.

In recent years libraries have faced a constant stream of change. Changes are occurring not just at the operational level (think of the impact of the

Internet, the web or Google on our local practices); there has also been a paradigm shift in how libraries are perceived. For example, these days libraries are often seen as social spaces with a focus on customer needs, rather than the quiet, scholarly environments of the 20th Century. However, there is no doubt in my mind that this shift in thinking is not universally accepted. The rate and extent of change means that we should not assume that there is a shared understanding of the principles on which our practices and polices are based.

Talking about theory and principles may seem abstract, 'wishy-washy' and unnecessarily time-consuming to practically-oriented library staff who just want to get on with the task at hand. But without such discussions conflict and resentment over change can endure longer than necessary. Taking time to dwell in the theoretical area could serve to bring staff together with a better understanding of the value of library activities and services. It may also be that some people will discover that what

68

they know is as important as what they do and this link between theory and practice means that their professional education was not a waste of time.

So What's The Problem?
Vye Perrone

Our libraries are full of books, journals and other materials that can help people understand the world and its problems. Being well informed about a problem is likely to lead to a more robust and lasting solution. So it is somewhat puzzling that even in libraries (where clarifying questions is fundamental to good reference interaction) there is a tendency to skip the information gathering and clarifying part of the problem-solving process and

leap straight to a solution. If action is taken to implement a solution without a full understanding of the problem, it is unlikely that the resolution will be long lasting.

Exploring problems can be uncomfortable for some people because dwelling on a problem may feel negative. There is a general expectation these days that we should always have a positive attitude in our approach to work and life. Also, when a problem is being investigated some people may take this as criticism of their per-

formance, so it is no wonder that people want to get out of the problem phase and onto solutions as soon as they can.

If we are not clear what the problem is, and more importantly, whose problem it is, we may end up confusing the cause of the problem with the ownership of it. To illustrate this, think about a baby throwing its food. The cause of the problem is the baby, but the baby doesn't have a problem, rather the person who has the problem is the one cleaning up the mess.

For a library example, consider a scenario at a university, where attendance at library information literacy classes is low. In order to clarify the low-attendance problem the perspectives of key participants need to be considered:

- Faculty report that they are concerned at the number of references to Wikipedia or commercial webpages in students' essays. They would like to see students use more scholarly resources and think more critically.

- Most students don't consider information literacy (or their lack of it) a problem; they are quite happy not attending the library's information literacy classes. They are probably pretty confident that they are literate or they wouldn't be at University. But some are disappointed that their grades aren't better, given the time they spent on their essays; others find searching library resources frustrating, complicated or confusing.

· Librarians recognize that they can help by teaching students more about finding quality resources, plus there are efficiencies to be gained for the library by encouraging users to become information literate: The more they can do themselves, or learn in a group, the less pressure there is on the reference desk to provide routine, basic help (leaving librarians with more time to provide expert, specialist help). Librarians also

want students to attend classes for the students' own good. (Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime).

'Information literacy' is a useful term for librarians as it describes a set of activities and knowledge that they consider essential in the information age. But like 'OPAC', it is very much a librarian's term. So while students' poor information skills may be the cause of the problem that librarians are trying to solve through information liter-

acy programmes, it is the librarians who own this problem, not the students. A full description of the problem will need to include these differing perspectives in order to identify an appropriate approach to the solution. In this case, the real problem may lie in the terminology or in how classes are marketed. A successful resolution of a problem is more likely if you can convince others that your problem is also their problem and to do this it is necessary to be able to see the issue from their viewpoint.

Once the problem has been clarified solutions can be considered. Just as having a problem can make librarians feel uncomfortable, action is what makes them feel effective. Often the action gets underway at the first hint of a possible solution, and it's all hands to the pump to get rid of the problem. But if it is not a good solution to the problem then the action is wasted.

Devoting time to exploring ideas is important at this stage. Comparing the strengths and weakness of several options,

even those that may not be possible (perhaps its cost is not affordable) will help pave the way to a strong decision. Working collaboratively with experts from other areas (e.g. IT or faculty) can give access to more options and viewpoints, but the problem needs to be shared with them, rather than just asking them to implement a specific solution.

Robust problem solving is time-consuming, but leaping to action too soon is not going to help, despite librarians' eagerness to get to work fixing

things. It is important to take time to gather information, ask questions and consult with others, so that we really can answer the question: What's the problem?

The Impact of the Digital World on Cataloging Systems
Steven K. Bowers

I was recently asked to speak to a class at the Wayne State University School of Library and Information Science about "The Impact of the Digital World on Cataloging Systems." I was excited to talk about a topic that connects all of "my library world" together so I thought I would also blog about what we covered in the class.

I work at the Detroit Area Library Network (DALNET),

where our core service is running an integrated library system (ILS) for most of our member institutions. Naturally I like to keep track of the ILS market and where library catalogs (OPACs in particular) are headed. As we consider how the digital world has impacted (library) cataloging systems I would like to start with my perceptions of what environment we are currently in.

If you have followed any of the links I have provided above you will see that I have used Wikipedia.org as my resource.

I have obviously already been impacted by the Internet even though I work for libraries. A few years ago most libraries and other academic institutions saw Wikipedia.org as an unsubstantiated information resource. Many still do, but informally, it is a major source of information for the digital world's inhabitants. So, as I look to define the world we are in today, I think it is fitting to cite from Wikipedia.org:

The Information Age (in which our digital world exists) provides " . . . the ability of indi-

viduals to transfer information freely, and to have instant access to knowledge . . . "

If only it were so easy! Some of us well know that not all information is transferred freely, or freely accessible. And contrary to popular belief, not all information can be found in digital form on the Internet (just a lot of it!). Regardless of what "information professionals" may know, however, we are dealing with the above quoted perception (ideal?) that many library users (and non-users) may have. This perception of infor-

mation access is the environment that libraries are now operating in.

For the most part libraries currently do not have the large "Web Scale" presence that Internet search engines do, although worldcat.org is attempting to meet this challenge. Post Z39.50 single search interfaces are starting to be replaced by catalogs that include indexing for multiple targets, including library catalog information, serial indexing and abstracting, and access to digital collections and content. Importantly, li-

brary systems still provide organized access to information, unlike the often much more limited and/or non-existent taxonomies of Web search mechanism. But library catalogs are still not as easy to use as they could be. Do digital users care about taxonomy? Even if I believe that they should we need to learn to meet the searchers where they are, in the world of "instant access."

Another notable change we are seeing is the inclusion of social networking (Web 2.0) elements in our online catalogs. The mo-

bile (smart-phone) revolution is no longer the future (it is already upon us). Mobility provides individual access to personal devices and applications. This mobility has only increased the new interactive nature of information access, and has created a new form of information creation. Library catalogs are transforming (slowly) to become a "place" for social interaction and a means for users to participate in information creation and organization, through reviews, tagging, and social bookmarking. These tools can then be used for

"discovery" of "relevant" information. These interactive features are now integral part of the Internet and expected by many users as common place.

A couple of years ago open-source library systems were thought to be the future of the ILS. Some projects have made notable progress, such as open-ils.org (Evergreen), and koha.org. Many individuals in the library science profession may still have their hopes set high. Whether or not open-source systems are the future of library systems, their explora-

tion has perhaps more importantly caused ILS vendors to consider more "open systems," which may have the biggest impact on cataloging systems. Open-source software allows anyone to have access to the source code of a software program whereas "open systems" may still have proprietary code but they are designed to be more interoperable with other systems. The OLE Project recently finished a draft report on open-source and open systems for libraries. Both open-source and open systems have allowed

some cataloging systems to become more customizable.

These are some of the impacts that the digital world is having on library systems. I am looking forward to the library systems of the future: interactive, mobile, and easy to use. I am intrigued by the possibility of a new information profession that invites the user to participate in information creation, organization, and discovery. If this is not where we are headed then we may be left behind.

Some Sites to Check Out

Topic: Developing "Web Scale" discovery tools for a large on-line presence. The OPAC (on-line catalog) is as important as the underlying database.

Check out: worldcat.org, www.oclc.org/ca/en/productwor k s / w e b s c a l e . h t m , scholar.google.com

Topic: Library Catalogs and Web 2.0

Check out: librarything.com, w w w . c h i l i f r e s h . c o m , w w w . a d d t h i s . c o m , www.frbr.org

Topic: Mobile Devices, Apps (Applications), Mashups (web

app hybrids), and APIs (Application Program Interfaces), Widgets (mini apps), Amazon Web Services

Check out: www.google.com/mobile, www.google.com/search?q=library+mashups, techessence.info/apis/, www.widgetbox.com/tag/library, aws.amazon.com

Topic: Open Source and Open Systems, OAI (Open Archives Initiative), The OLE Project

Check out koha.org, liblime.org, open-ils.org (Evergreen), www.esilibrary.com/esi (Equi-

nox), www.openarchives.org/, oleproject.org

Some Considerations When Proposing a Digital Project
Steven K. Bowers

At the Detriot Area Library Network (DALNET), we are often asked by member libraries to help them design digital projects. Everyone may have a different idea of what a digital project is: creating new content, organizing access to existing online content, digitizing existing collections, etc. So, in addtion to consulting with our members, over the years we have created several handouts about things to consider when you are think-

ing about creating a digital project. Since my last blog article was about the effects of the digital world on library systems I thought in this article I would talk about some of the planning elements that we have suggested to our libraries when they are creating digital content.

1. Scope of the project

I think it is important to start with defining the scope of the project. To define the scope of a project it may be useful to an-

swer these types of questions:

*   What is the purpose of the project; why are you creating this new project?
*   What material should be included in the proposed digital project? Is the project duplicative of other existing digital material?
*   Is the project finite in the scope of materials to be included or will it be an ongoing effort to digitize new materials?
*   Who will have access to the project/information created? Will the project only be accessible to internal constituents or

will the project be open to anyone online? Check out the Open Content Alliance.

2. Project Costs

Of course you have to think about financing before you get too far involved. Think about who will incur the costs for the project or how will the project costs be paid for? How will the project be maintained or sustained financially? Make sure to consider these costs that may be associated with creating and maintaining the digital project:

* Equipment
* Personnel
* Preservation materials
* Maintenance, hosting, and access of the project ¥ Legal and/or registration fees

3. Copyright

Libraries know all about copyright, right? Make sure creation of your project does not violate copyright. Consider:

* Who owns copyright of the materials to be included in the digital project?

* What steps may be necessary to acquire permissions for creating digital copies of materials to be included in the digital project?
* What costs may be associated with acquiring copyright permissions?
* Check out: the U.S. Copyright Office, Is It Protected By Copyright? slide rule, and the Section 108 spinner

4. Standards and systems to employ

In libraries, any project undertaken should follow standards

and defined systems; we are the organizers of information! Sometimes, however, it can be a task to select which ones to use! Try thinking about:

* What type of software/ database will be used?
* What standard for a metadata scheme will be chosen if relevant? Dublin Core, MARC, Encoded Archive Description (EAD), others . . .
* Accessibility considerations: W3C/WCAG, Open Archives, etc.
* What steps will be taken to ensure that selected standards are employed once they are se-

lected?

5. Work Responsibilities, Timelines, and Target Dates

Perhaps its a given that part of the project plan has to include who will do all the work. But make sure to consider these areas:

* Who will contribute to the content and creation of the project? In what way will each participant be involved?
* What policies should be developed to guide content contribution?

*   Who will be responsible for project oversight?

*   Who will be responsible for maintaining the project? Will the project need continual review or will the project have a Òcompletion date?Ó

*   What are the target dates for staff access and public access? Are these dates the same or different?

6. Marketing and Review

Don't forget about marketing and review. Any business venture or new product needs marketing to be successful.

Whether by word of mouth or through conventional and/or online tools think about how your project will be marketed. Make sure the marketing is part of the project plans you have created for work assignments and timelines.

Be prepared to review the success of your project. Define how the use or usefulness of the project will be reviewed before you start. Will you be able to get statistics from the system you have selected? Make sure that you will be able to review the pro-

ject in a way that is important to you and your constituents.

7. Get going on your new digital projects! Have fun! Create new and unique information resources that show why you library is valued!

If you would like to get some ideas for projects, check out the DALNET Digital Projects page. What are your ideas for projects or for digital preparation of digital project plans?

We've Built a Library -- Now Let's Open It
Kristin Shoemaker

I'm a conflicted person, it would seem. I regularly use, and encourage the use of, open source software. In some settings -- public computing, thin client, and cloud environments -- there isn't, in my mind, any closed system that comes *close* to delivering what an open platform offers.

I believe heartily that open source code benefits both developers and end-users -- in

perpetuity. Open source development efforts can (and do) die -- but the application, the code, the vital organs that sustained it during development live on. An abandoned open source software project is much like what the medical profession calls a beating heart cadaver. I learned this from Mary Roach's book Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers.

The fact that I read books about corpses that have more of a life than I do isn't what makes me a conflicted soul. The fact that I

read it on my second generation Kindle most certainly does.

There'd been a relatively low key skirmish surrounding the Kindle for some time. It only recently became a full-fledged battle in the eyes of the general public when pirated ebooks sold via Amazon were removed from the devices (the purchase price was refunded). Many people suddenly (finally?) began to wonder if they really *owned* the books on the device.

No, they don't. While the reasons I decided to purchase a

Kindle were varied (and surprisingly complex), it was partly because I was pleased in regards to how much I *did* own the content I bought.

Yes, it uses a closed file format (as well as copy protection software). To keep with our morbid metaphor: If closed *software* is a mortal entity, then closed formats are the "Not an organ donor" directive penned on a "Do not resuscitate" form. Closed formats are bad, kids. They *are*, and I say that without reservation. I say it feeling the appropriate amount of hypoc-

risy, guilt, and with the realization that admitting I *know* I don't really own the books makes this all sound even *more* naive.

Amazon, though using a closed format of death, allows syncing to multiple Kindles (or iPhone/iPod Touch devices running the Kindle app) registered to my account. It allows me to register or de-register devices, delete, and re-download purchased content indefinitely. It is closed, it is copy protected, and it is most decidedly not ideal, but it is miles ahead of where the mu-

sic industry was with DRM-protected MP3s only a few years ago.

I am hoping Amazon eventually does the right thing and opens the Kindle file format -- not the firmware, not any little unique to the Kindle hardware features (it'd be nice, but is admittedly unrealistic). I believe it will happen, and that the technology *has* to progress through these restrictive, closed stages. It's critical that this happen now, as content merges from the purely physical form into the "born digital" state.

Why? Simple. While a proprietary hardware/software vendor closing up shop means losing a device or application, a no-longer-supported proprietary file format means losing *information.* As new technologies take shape, catch on, and people experience this firsthand, vendors will be pressured to ensure content is available now -- and in the future. If a device or application is lost to the ages, it may well have been inevitable. If the information produced by those using the device is lost -- *that* is simply unconscionable.

Libraries and Linux: The Strange Parallels of Stacks and Software
Kristin Shoemaker

There are some obvious similarities between the quintessential Linux user and the classical image of the librarian, covering the gamut of good, bad and indifferent. Librarians foster the curiosity and intellectual growth of diverse patrons, connecting them with reliable sources of information and suggesting entertaining books, music and movies. The Linux community encourages users to

examine, change, and take the operating system further -- re-gardless of whether "further" works out as modifying a kernel module or creating a new scal-able vector graphic icon set for the desktop.

Linux users, when faced with a question that's been asked mil-lions of times throughout the ages -- one with an easily dis-covered answer, if the soul ask-ing had only taken a few sec-onds -- often respond with a re-sounding "RTFM" (read the f****** manual). Sometimes this response will be shaken up

with a stray "Google is your friend." Librarians, by matter of course, prefer to teach a man to fish rather than feed him -- and sometimes patrons, quite capable of fishing when pointed towards the appropriate body of water, would really prefer to be fed their fish, with a couple side dishes, butter, lemon, dessert, and valet parking for good measure. That's when they tend to be greeted with the response, "Look it up." And yes, sometimes this response will be shaken up with a stray "Google is your friend."

By and large, the quintessential Linux user and classical librarian persona are stereotypes. Stereotypes generally have a grain of truth buried in there somewhere. I think what's most awe-inspiring about these two demographics -- similar, yet simultaneously so utterly *different* -- isn't the kindred philosophies or the occasionally pointed terms used to encourage others to seek answers on their own. It's the shocking way that skills learned in one setting (librarianship, fooling around with Linux in nearly any capac-

ity) are so complementary and transferable.

In its elemental form: These settings are complementary because neither places high value on knowing the answer right from the start -- the value, the knowledge, the ability arises from understanding what question actually needs an answer, and then knowing how to track that answer down.

Think of troubleshooting an error as a reference interview. Think of a reference interview as troubleshooting an error. It

works reasonably well both ways.

I've not transformed any Linux users I know into librarians, but I've found there's a healthy appreciation of the skills required in the stacks. The library just isn't where they see themselves seeking employment. That's fine. I know many librarians who use Linux in some capacity -- to play around and learn, to develop applications, or some mix of the two. I know many librarians who appreciate the skills required in software development (or general system

maintenance). They don't pursue it, it's not their thing. And that, too, is fine. But there's a response encountered just a little too frequently to sit right, "I could never do that. It's too [insert phrase that thinly veils the notion that computers are magical and completely undocumented creations]."

Troubleshooting *is* a reference interview. In many ways, it's the *easiest* reference interview you'll ever conduct. While Linux error messages and logs seem cryptic, or complete to the point of superfluity, it doesn't

take long to narrow down the log files and specific lines that'll help identify the source of the problem. Yes, you'll likely get more information than you need from this interview, but you're going to *get* the information needed to find an answer and believe me, the system won't question why the hell you're asking all these follow up questions and not just providing a solution to the question raised.

The best part is, of course, you don't *have* to know what the error really *means*. In a general

sense, perhaps, but that can also be rooted out fairly quickly by searching help files. Not knowing exactly what wlan0: disassociating by local choice (reason=3) means isn't a problem. If the time of a system glitch (say, a lost wireless connection) corresponds to the message, it's a fine place to start searching the most suspect looking phrases. We're librarians. We do this all the time.

And by the way, my wireless card doesn't have a superiority complex. The error was the product of a dodgy driver up-

date.

Using Splash Pages
Mikael Jacobsen

The Library Experience, including events, is gaining in importance as content becomes ubiquitous. Word of mouth and posters in the library will only take us so far, especially for one time event/programs. A little over a year ago I decided to try something new and exciting to advertise programs online at the small Franklin Park Public Library, IL (my employer at the time).

Advertisements for upcoming

programs/events on public library websites usually consist of a title, a short description, and maybe a small image. In the flashy, colorful World Wide Web these advertisements are easily overlooked or ignored in the few seconds that the patron spends on the front page of a library website. This is even more true if learning about library programs isn't the original goal of the visit to the website. In fact, the experiment that originated this blog post came about solely because of the use of Google Analytics website analytic service. I discovered that a

large portion of the visits to the Franklin Park Public Library website consisted of only viewing the front page (79%) and lasted less than 10 seconds (82%). These statistics are fairly standard among public libraries according to the data I was provided by the some of the wonderful librarians of the Web4lib listserv.

The statistics gathered from Google Analytics may be caused by public libraries increasingly becoming the physical gateway to the internet for many patrons with a quick stop at the

homepage of the browsers, usually the library's front page. Another potential reason to help explain these statistics is that patrons are briefly using the library's front page as a portal to the OPAC and databases. So we have a captive audience coming to the library website and then moving on. How many for profit agencies would kill to have the same opportunity? However the usage statistics are generated, it does quickly bring two glaring truths to the forefront. Library websites have a relatively large local audience and also a very short time span

to catch a website user's eye. So the question I wanted to answer was how to convert these website visitors to library program participants? I decided to try splash pages. I had not heard of, read about, or found any libraries that were using splash pages to market their events/programs, yet I continuously came across them in for-profit websites. I also hoped making them would be fun.

Splash Pages

A splash page is an introductory webpage specifically designed

to quickly grab a visitor's attention. It usually does not conform to the parental structure of the website. It can have a different color scheme, menu structure, content division, header, footer, and anything and everything else. For-profit website splash pages are used as prime real estate for advertising.

I needed my splash pages to be eye catching, designed for a single purpose, and load quickly in order to entice the patron in to reading about the program/ event. In order to keep the

splash pages fresh, it was important not to leave one up for longer than a week and to use the technique only once a month. It was also important to have a clear and easily found link to the libraryÕs normal frontpage.

The Experiment (consult the links to see screenshots of the splash pages)

1. Journal Writing Workshop for adults. I used this program as a jumping off point simply because it was the right

time (I had finished designing the Franklin Park Library website using Drupal 5 and discovered the Front Page module http://drupal.org/project/front). 12.5% (1 in 8) of participants responded to a survey that they learned about the program from the splash page. A success. *(See: http://www.flickr.com/photos/franklinparklibrary/2438230069/sizes/o/in/set-72157603728908070/)*

2. Making Anklets and Bracelets for teens and

tweens. 100% (6 of 6) of participants responded that they learned about the program through the splash page. A success. *(See: http://www.flickr.com/photos/franklinparklibrary/2476265572/sizes/o/in/set-72157603728908070/)*

3. Lapsit Storytime. This program had no attendees. A failure. *(See: http://www.flickr.com/photos/franklinparklibrary/2494984925/sizes/o/in/set-72157603728908070/)*

4. Cirque du Soleil ticket giveaway. This event had the same amount of participants as a like giveaway the previous year, which wasn't advertised by splash page. A failure. *(See: http://www.flickr.com/photos/franklinparklibrary/2515715681/sizes/o/in/set-72157603728908070/)*

5. National Library Week. Patron participation doubled. No surveys were handed out on why patrons participated. A success. *(See:*

http://www.flickr.com/pho tos/franklinparklibrary/23 80510075/sizes/o/in/set-72 157603728908070/)

6. Summer Reader Club for youth, teens, and adults. Participation doubled for each group. No statistics were gathered on why individuals participated. A success. *(See: http://www.flickr.com/pho tos/franklinparklibrary/25 87770362/sizes/o/in/set-72 157603728908070/)*

7. A Teen and Tween Gaming Event. 10% (4 of 40) of participants came be-

cause of the splash page with 30% not responding. A success. *(See: http://www.flickr.com/photos/franklinparklibrary/2671756960/sizes/o/in/set-72157603728908070/)*

8. Reader Appreciation Party. No surveys were handed out but according to staff observation many more showed up than previous years. This was the only splash page to use Flash animation style effects (Sprout Builder). A success. *(See: http://www.flickr.com/pho*

tos/franklinparklibrary/27
34910727/sizes/o/in/set-72
157603728908070/)

Findings Summary

Admittedly this experiment is not scientific since it is dealing with a real library which makes laboratory single variable settings impossible. Some intriguing conclusions are still reached. In my experience, splash pages increased participation in most library events and programs, sometimes dramatically. Teens and adult programs benefited the most while

134

youth programs were not helped. The impact of using splash pages will likely vary from library to library from year to year.

It is interesting to note that the library never had even one complaint about adding an extra click to getting to the library content.

I would love to know if, when, and how other libraries are using splash pages.

BookMatch
Mikael Jacobsen

Ok, I didn't plan on writing about BookMatch for LISNews. It isn't very philosophically inspiring or technically amazing. However, it is a patron pleaser and service that any public library can implement in one form or another and enhances participants "Library Experience." So, the question I kept asking myself when considering what to write was, "should I present an interesting but quickly forgotten bit of library philosophy or should I explain

and walk through a well loved service?" The latter is what I would prefer to read.

BookMatch is the Skokie Public Library bringing readers advisory online.

The Mechanics

BookMatch is put together by using SurveyMonkey, Wikispaces, and a Microsoft Word form. This process is in continuous flux as questions are rewritten, deleted, or added.

SurveryMonkey was used because of familiarity with the product and the ease of customization. More importantly SurveyMonkey provides the option of form logic, which is a pain to code...I hear. The BookMatch survey has nine paths depending on a patron's answer to questions. For example, "Do you read romances?" The answer yes takes the patron to questions about romance and answering no skips that section. "Do you read fiction only or fiction and nonfiction or nonfiction only?" This question offers three different question paths.

Form logic avoids patrons having to answer or even look at questions that do not apply to their reading tastes, essential if you do not want strictly nonfiction readers being faced with questions about Sword and Sorcery tastes.

Once the survey is received, it is transferred to a private wiki hosted by Wikispaces. A link to the survey and the date it was received is added to the Surveys Awaiting Response page. It is then reviewed by around twenty-five reader advisors with wildly divergent reading

tastes. Suggested items are added to the discussion area of the wiki. Each suggestion entry has the title of the book, author, call number and a review/ summary usually from a professional journal such as Booklist or the Library Journal.

Once the twenty to twenty-five titles have been suggested, the manager of that particular BookMatch adds them to a Microsoft Word form The form is turned in to a PDF using an open source Word to PDF converter and emailed/mailed/left at a desk for the patron. The

link on the wiki is then transferred to the completed area.

Training the reader services staff to work with the wiki and the Microsoft form took a little time. Interestingly enough, suggesting books, the most important and arguably most difficult aspect of working on a Book-Match, caused almost no issues. Suggesting titles has been universally agreed to be fun. An added benefit to using a wiki is that the entire RS staff is now more than proficient in using wikis. This will make implementing other projects that call

for online collaboration through wikis easier to implement.

Without advertising, programs such BookMatch would wither on the vine. We used the traditional public library advertising methods. It was announced on the front page of the website and described in the quarterly update. We have placed Moo Cards at the reader services desk with a short description and the URL.

Value

Patrons of all ages love this service. It has been surprising to us how many teens and college age patrons have submitted surveys. Here are a few quotes excerpted from emails sent to Ricki Nordmeyer (the brains behind BookMatch).

> * I LOVE my BookMatch list. I used to have a hard time finding books, and it is so helpful.
> * I LOVE LOVE LOVE the BookMatch service. I have found new authors that I

probably wouldn't have found.

* I am a huge fan of the service you provide through BookMatch. Finding a good read has been a challenge for me. I enjoy reading, yet couldn't find the right books for me. While the survey was rather thorough, it was simple to complete.

An added benefit is that it has made the entire RS department better at their jobs. If a patron comes to the desk and tells me they like Jodi Picoult and

Stephanie Meyer (two authors I have never read) I can use previous BookMatches to easily suggest other authors.

So BookMatch is beloved by patrons and makes our RS staff stronger at suggesting books, what is not to love about it?

About the authors

Stephen Michael Kellat received his Master of Science in Library Science from Clarion University of Pennsylvania in 2004. He presently writes and presents *LISTen: An LISNews.org Podcast* from extreme northeastern Ohio. He has previously worked in academic cataloging, private sector retail, and alpaca husbandry.

Dan Messer is a public circulation librarian and has worked in library circulation for 16 years. He's a science historian and amateur astronomer living, working, and netcasting in Arizona. Every other week, his alter ego makes an appearance on LISNews as The Faceless Historian, the host of Hyperlinked History.

Vye Perrone is Associate University Librarian, Collection Services at the University of Waikato Library in New Zealand. She was President of the Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA) in 2007/2008 and has just finished her year as Immediate Past President. Vye completed her MLIS from Victoria University of Wellington in 1998.

Steven K. Bowers received his Master of Library and Information Science from Wayne State University. He presently is Executive Director of the Detroit Area Library Network (DALNET). He was named a Library Journal Mover & Shaker in 2008.

Kristin Shoemaker ("shoe") is the collective effort of the Simmons GSLIS development project. Constantly in need of either a warm reboot (or at least a Ctrl-Alt-Bksp and restart of the graphical server), she is a contributor at OStatic, the GigaOM network's open source portal.

Mikael "Mick" Jacobsen is an Adult Services Librarian at the Skokie Public Library, IL. He received his Masters in Library and Information Science from Dominican University in January of 2008. He is a collaborating blogger at Tame the Web.

Notes